Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend page 4, line 10 as follows:

Page 4, lines 1-10:

The gas-tight seal between the reactive oxygen (or air) and hydrogen is another problem in the coextensive design. The seal would require perfect impregnation of the peripheral regions of the gas distributor. But this impregnation would have to extend to the membrane below the gas distributor substrate to prevent hydrogen seeping through to the outer edge of the gas distributor substrate. That is scarcely possible because of the fine pores in the gas distributor substrates and catalyst layers. There is no direct contact of the sealing material with a free surface of the ionic ally conductive membrane. Therefore there can be increased penetration of hydrogen to the cathode of the membrane electrode unit in the coextensive design. That results in lowering of the open cell voltage (OCV) and, because of that, in a lower electrical ~~capacity~~ performance of the MEV.

Please amend page 10, example 1, line 13, as follows:

Page 10, lines 11-16:

The entire assembly is packaged between two release films and initially heated in a hot press for 90 seconds without pressure at a plate temperature of 165°C. Then the press force is raised to 10 metric tons and the assembly is pressed for 30 seconds under that force. Then it is cooled to room temperature. The finished membrane electrode unit with semi-coextensive design has a smooth, transparent plastic edge, which adheres very well to the MEU.